



OFFICE FOR STANDARDS
IN EDUCATION

INSPECTING SUBJECTS AND ASPECTS 11-18

ART

February 1999

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INSPECTING ART

INTRODUCTION

As an inspector of art, you need to find out how good the pupils are at the subject, to what extent they understand what lies at its heart, and whether it captures their interest. You are likely to be able to explain your findings largely by evaluating the rate at which they progress and judging how stimulating and effective the teaching is.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

These are the main questions which your inspection should answer.

- How high are the standards in art, and are they high enough?
- How well are pupils progressing?
- How well is art taught?

Before you begin your inspection in the school

- Revise your knowledge of the *Handbook* and associated guidance. Ensure that you are familiar with what is required.
- Where necessary, make sure you are familiar with the course objectives and the examination syllabuses used by the school.

You should already have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum Programme of Study for art and the 'end of key stage descriptions' for pupils' attainment by age 14.

- Analyse performance data, to form a view of the standards achieved in recent years and any trends, and to establish hypotheses about strengths and weaknesses in art.
- Study any departmental documentation which has been made available, and evaluate its potential contribution to the quality of teaching and its coverage of curricular requirements.

When you are in the school

- Use the first-hand evidence from observation of lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking with them to assess what the current pupils are like at the subject, what they do well, and where they could do better. Focus on the year groups in which the pupils become 14, 16 and 18. Refer to the records of teachers' assessments of pupils' work. Assess what progress pupils are making through the school - how rapid it is, on how wide a front and in what depth.
- Observe teaching, talk with teachers about their work, look at their plans and records, and judge how effective the teaching is - how it contributes to pupils' attitudes to learning, progress and standards. See which approaches work well and which are unsuccessful.

- Take stock of any other factors which affect the teaching of art and the standards achieved. In particular, assess how effectively the subject is led and managed.
- Make sure that your observation forms contain enough evidence to support your judgements; telling examples are needed for your subject report.

Literacy and information technology

- Judge the contribution of art to pupils' reading and writing.
- Evaluate any contribution which art makes to pupils' capability in information technology.
- Where information and communications technology is used to support pupils' learning in art, evaluate the extent to which it enhances the pupils' standards of work. Whilst the pupils may be working well below their competence in information technology, this may still be appropriate to the art task.
- Record your evidence and evaluations in the 'Other significant evidence' section of the observation form.

Feeding back your inspection findings

- Feed back your findings clearly and helpfully to the head of art and to the individual teachers by:
 - identifying the most important strengths and weaknesses in the teaching, and supporting your assessments with illustrations from the lessons you have seen;
 - giving convincing reasons for what you judge to be successful or otherwise, making clear how the teaching affects what is achieved;
 - showing the head of department how other factors, particularly leadership and management, affect the quality of teaching and the standards achieved;
 - ensuring that there is opportunity to discuss the findings and that points for development are identified.

Writing the subject section

The art section of the report should tell a coherent and convincing story. It should explain why the standards achieved are as they are. In particular, you should evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the teaching. The following questions will help you to check the quality of your reporting.

- Are examination results interpreted so as to give a clear view of the standards attained, to show how they compare with other subjects in the school, and to identify any trends over time?

- Are there clear judgements of what is achieved by the pupils in the years in which they become 14, 16 and 18? Are the strong and weak features identified in the different aspects of the subject?
- Is there a convincing explanation of any significant differences between what is seen and what results indicate?
- Are variations in the progress of different groups or in different years evaluated and explained?
- Does the evaluation of teaching spell out how it affects the pupils' response and what they achieve? Is it clear which teaching methods are successful and which are not? Is there an explanation of any other factors, such as leadership and management, which are significant in affecting standards?
- Is it clear how far standards and teaching have improved since the last inspection and are reasons given?
- Are the main judgements supported by the most telling examples?
- Is it clear what needs to be done to improve standards in art?

ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS

Interpreting data

Your judgements on attainment in art will be based on **performance data** and direct **observations** in the school. Any differences between these judgements **must be explained convincingly**.

- For pupils aged 16, compare the school's GCSE results with:
 - the results achieved in schools nationally;
 - the results for schools of 'similar type' (comprehensive, selective or modern);
 - the results achieved in other subjects in the school.

The comparisons with other subjects are indications whether standards are as high as they should be. In interpreting results, you may need to refer to matters such as a change in the syllabus, the nature of the year group, or the number of pupils involved. You should also be alert to the school's curriculum and entry policies.

You will need to find out whether the school enters candidates for the Unendorsed GCSE course as well as one or more of the available option courses (that is, graphics, textiles, 3-D or photography). Whatever the pattern of entry for GCSE, inspectors need to consider whether the courses offered are appropriate to the needs of the pupils and their previous experience of the subject, and whether they reflect the time and resources available.

- Evaluate the A-level and AS results, comparing them with the national results, including those for schools of a similar type. Look at results over several years and take account of performance in GCSE and any value-added measures.

*In making judgements, you will need to **exercise caution** because of the various factors at play, such as the numbers involved and the nature of the students and courses.*

Using evidence from observations

- For pupils in the year group in which they become 14, evaluate their attainment according to what is typical in relation to the 'end of key stage descriptions'. For pupils in the year groups in which they become 16 and 18, judge their attainment according to the standards set by examination syllabuses and course requirements for GCSE, A-level, AS or GNVQ.

For pupils of 14 and above, there is a trend for girls to perform much better than boys, and you should be able to comment on this issue in the school, perhaps with evidence from teachers' assessment.

For pupils with special educational needs, including those in special schools, judgements on standards, particularly progress, are made by taking into account their best means of communicating - for example, by computer or other form of technology.

- Base your judgements about standards of pupils' work on evidence from across the whole art, craft and design curriculum: that is the skills of investigating and making, and the degree of knowledge and understanding exhibited.

*You need to evaluate how these two aspects are interwoven so that what is learnt in one serves to reinforce learning in the other. **Significant weakness in either aspect means that standards overall cannot be high enough.***

- Judge the **progress** which pupils make in each year, referring to any significant differences between particular groups, such as able pupils, those with special educational needs, and boys and girls.

The evidence comes from talking with pupils, looking at their written work and seeing how they get on in lessons - how much do they learn and at what rate?

For pupils with special educational needs, including those in special schools, judgements on standards, particularly progress, are made by taking into account the need for any modifications of the work (because of sensory, physical, emotional or learning disabilities) to promote pupils' access to both aspects of the work.

- **Look at** pupils' practical work as an important source of evidence about standards, but take care not to interpret this evidence in isolation. Also make full use of available work on display and any samples of work.
- **Talk** with pupils about their current and past work.

Projects often take several weeks and you may find pupils engaged in work which had its original stimulus some time before the inspection. You will need to seek evidence of the development of that work, and of the pupils' progress during the year groups or course in question, through their sketchbooks or portfolios.

- When you **look at** pupils' work, **observe** them in lessons and **talk with** them, concentrate on the extent to which pupils can:
 - understand the 'vocabulary' of the visual language - line, tone, colour, pattern, texture, shape, form and space - and apply this language with increasing effectiveness in their work;
 - select and use a range of resources and materials confidently, employing appropriate techniques;
 - communicate ideas in two and three dimensions;
 - explore, investigate and experiment with materials and ideas, transferring knowledge gained in one activity or medium to another - for example, developing drawings of natural forms into a printed design motif;
 - use skills of visual analysis in recording images and ideas effectively from direct observation, memory, feelings and imagination;
 - use skills of visual analysis in selecting and organising visual and other resources for example, for pupils aged 14 to 16, sketchbooks and resource sheets which stimulate and support project work;
 - understand art, craft and design in historical, contemporary and industrial or commercial contexts, and use this to inform and enrich their own work - for example, where a professional textiles designer shows her work to pupils, sets them a textiles design brief, and helps them evaluate their own work;
 - use information and communications technology fluently as a medium for the generation of original artwork and as a tool for research and investigation.
- Judge the extent to which pupils' work shows evidence of:
 - good making skills;
 - thorough investigation of ideas and good expression of them;
 - increasingly informed evaluation of their own work and that of other artists, designers and craftworkers, using the right critical vocabulary;
 - transferring what is learnt in other subjects to their work in art.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES TO LEARNING

- Look out for these particular characteristics which pupils may show in art:
 - curiosity, interest, and a willingness to investigate with enthusiasm and a sense of discovery;
 - a readiness to question their own ideas and adapt and modify their work;
 - being prepared to persevere with often lengthy tasks;
 - a mature response to the flexible organisation and management necessary in art lessons and studios, in particular:
 - settling to work unprompted;
 - respecting other pupils' entitlement to work unhindered;
 - taking care of their own work and that of others;
 - increasing willingness to learn from their own mistakes and from unexpected discoveries during exploration;
 - a growing understanding that their work can develop through their intuitive responses and actions as well as by logical decision making;
 - being prepared, when required, to work independently, using their own initiative.

TEACHING

- Judge the quality of teaching by weighing its strengths and weaknesses according to the criteria in the *Framework*, and assess its **impact on educational standards**.

Teaching cannot be satisfactory where pupils, or a significant minority of them, learn less than you would expect considering what they already knew. The same is true where they do not firmly consolidate their learning.

- Inform your views by reference to the characteristics of effective art teaching, in which the teacher:
 - has secure and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of concepts and skills across the disciplines of art, craft and design (*subject knowledge*);
 - uses the terms, language and symbolism of art, craft and design precisely and accurately (*subject knowledge*);
 - makes effective links between practical work and the application of associated knowledge, and between different aspects of art, craft and design (*subject knowledge*);

- understands and reflects the industrial or commercial applications and contexts of art, craft and design (*subject knowledge*);
- shows, in planning:
 - how the development of pupils' conceptual and technical skills is structured, managed and monitored;
 - how a balance is achieved between closely prescribed activities and more open-ended activities (*subject knowledge, planning, expectations, management*);
- provides, where necessary, confident and proficient demonstrations of techniques (*subject knowledge*);
- predicts the likely outcomes and pitfalls of an art activity, including issues of health and safety, and manages the lesson accordingly (*subject knowledge, planning, management*);
- intervenes sensitively with concise and accurate verbal and written assessments of pupils' work which are effective in helping them to make progress (*assessment*);
- encourages pupils to evaluate and reflect critically on their own work, supporting this by displaying the work of other pupils and other artists, discussing and comparing the techniques and approaches used (*subject knowledge, expectations, assessment*);
- encourages pupils to express opinions about their own and others' work, helping them to move from colloquial to more formal language, using an aesthetic and technical art vocabulary (*subject knowledge, expectations*);
- encourages pupils to look beyond technical accomplishment towards the expression of feeling, meaning and values through art (*planning, expectations*);
- uses efficient routines for getting out and putting away work and materials so as to maximise learning time (*planning, management, resources*);
- emphasises the use of individual pupils' sketchbooks, both in class and for homework, for practice in basic observational skills and recording techniques, gathering visual and other resources to support practical work and the research and investigation of ideas (*planning, expectations, assessment, homework*);
- understands the contemporary role of information and communications technology in art, craft and design, and uses it, where resources permit, as an integral part of teaching (*subject knowledge, planning, management*).

■ Be alert to **poor teaching**, which:

- shows a lack of knowledge of the subject, transmitting inaccurate knowledge, concepts or techniques which pupils take at face value;

- does not provide reliable and accurate instruction in the techniques being used by the pupils;
- does not provide adequate visual resources;
- for pupils aged 14 to 16 and students 16 to 18, is over-dependent on the teaching of narrow technical skills, with insufficient emphasis on the development of pupils' capacity to study independently;
- fails to display pupils' work or provide a well-organised and visually stimulating environment;
- fails to retain and store pupils work carefully.

■ Be wary, too, of teaching where:

- too many projects or tasks result in practical outcomes which are superficially attractive but identical or repetitive, with pupils given no scope for a personal, expressive or imaginative response;
- accomplished-looking work has relied heavily on copying, with little real understanding on the part of the pupils;
- visually "slick" imagery or technique has been based too much on secondary source material, or possibly results from over-prescription by the teacher.

OTHER ASPECTS OF PROVISION OR MANAGEMENT

Curriculum and assessment

- Be alert to factors which contribute to standards in art and, in particular, assess the extent to which:
- pupils throughout the age range have sufficient opportunity to work with the range of materials and the breadth of activities specified in the Programmes of Study or examination syllabuses;
 - there is balanced coverage of activities and materials;
 - time and depth of experience are adequate for pupils to master techniques, media and concepts, and to re-apply and consolidate established knowledge and techniques;
 - there is a balance of opportunities to investigate and solve problems within the contexts of art, craft and design, and also to explore and experiment with expression and communication;
 - pupils in all years make good use of information and communications technology in art, craft and design;

- planning takes into account pupils' need to progress from National Curriculum requirements to GCSE and from GCSE to post-16 courses;
- assessment draws on a range of evidence assembled over time, including pupils' sketchbooks and portfolios, and leads to informative reporting to parents, both on pupils' skills and on their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- Judge the contribution of art by considering the extent to which:
 - opportunities are provided for pupils to observe, reflect on, and record the built and natural environment to enable them to have a sensitive awareness of their surroundings;
 - the study of artists dealing with spiritual or religious themes, or the setting of subjects which raise moral issues such as war and conflict, encourages pupils to explore issues of spirituality and morality in visual form;
 - there are opportunities to visit galleries or to meet and work with artists;
 - teachers encourage lively enquiry into the meaning and values of art from the past, modern and contemporary art, and art from non-Western cultures.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- Assess the effect which these have on standards by seeing whether:
 - the particular expertise of teachers in specific disciplines of art, craft and design is effectively used (including skills acquired by a teacher previously employed as a designer in industry);
 - any support technicians are effectively deployed;
 - the National Curriculum requirements for drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, sculpture and textiles are adequately supported for pupils to the age of 14;
 - visual resources and books support teaching about the work of artists, craftspeople and designers in:
 - a variety of genres and styles;
 - the past and present;
 - a variety of cultures;
 - from age 14 to 16 and beyond, pupils have access to books and other material encouraging personal research into a diverse range of art, craft and design;

- there are sufficient dedicated rooms to allow for:
 - the safe development of practical skills;
 - work on a large scale where desirable;
 - the safe storage of materials and pupils' work;
- accommodation stimulates and supports visual investigation.

Three-dimensional work

- Judge the quality of three-dimensional work and the provision for it in a wide range of materials. Assess what pupils learn through making.

The arts

- Co-ordinate your judgements with other inspectors in order to judge the standards achieved in the arts in the school and the quality of provision for them.

Information technology

- Judge the contribution which information and communications technology makes to learning in art.
- Also judge the contribution which art makes to the consolidation and development of skills in information technology.

For example, consider the use of art programs and of CD-ROM and the Internet for access to artistic information.

OBSERVATION FORMS

There follow two sample observation forms for art. These are intended to show how evidence and judgements contribute to a coherent picture of attainment in these art lessons. In one lesson, the teaching is judged to be 'very good' (grade 2) and in the other it is considered 'satisfactory' (grade 4).

ART YEAR 9 MIXED ABILITY - Very good teaching

CONTEXT: Continuing with illustrative painting based on months of year. Use of landscape and decorative border. Watercolour technique. AT1: development of ideas from direct observation and imagination; use sketchbook, select and interpret visual elements. AT2: identify how visual elements are used to convey feelings, identify codes and conventions.

TEACHING: Materials and resources for lesson well organised and to hand. Very clear explanation and instruction at start of lesson. Good demonstration of water-colour technique. Frequent individual advice and guidance. Reference to previous work and resource material used very well to help pupils resolve problems for themselves, no spoon feeding. Very good integration of practical work with exploring historical aspects and artistic traditions (graphic illustrations, calendar designs, 19th C landscapes). Teacher used own artwork particularly effectively as example. Indicates particular strengths in subject knowledge and methodology. High expectations. Other strengths are assessment technique and use of resources. Grade 2

RESPONSE: Good level of concentration. Ps eager and interested. Willing to share resources and work cooperatively. Care and respect for materials and equipment. Respond particularly well to seeing examples of CT's own work (motivates them effectively) and show pride in achieving good results of their own in the water-colour technique. Grade 3

ATTAINMENT: Watercolour techniques good for age - e.g. used effectively to achieve representation of spatial effects in the decorative images. Most understand the balance required between design and representation, producing a good standard of decorative work. Sketchbooks used well to gather visual reference e.g. landscape elements from photographic sources. Pupils have also gained some knowledge of 19th Century European painters. Grade 3

PROGRESS: Ps show good levels of purposeful application and thinking throughout the lesson. Technical skills developing well in application of colour wash and handling of textural effects. Confidence in skills obvious - helped by CT's demonstration. Good progress in the sequential development of ideas supported by earlier research and investigation. Grade 3

ART YEAR 10 MIXED ABILITY - Satisfactory teaching

CONTEXT: Double lesson: 6 out of unit of 8: Non ceramic 3D construction work. Paper/card constructions are outcomes of a sequence of work that began with direct observation drawings of plant forms and onto plans/drawings for sculptures.

TEACHING: Adequate planning with quiet, clear statement at outset on organisation of materials and reminder of targets set for this session. High expectations, reasonable methodology and subject knowledge: T works mainly on one to one basis offering praise, encouragement and technical advice as appropriate - particularly effective at reinforcing and building on earlier experience of materials, techniques and visual analysis. Least effective in finding the right level with less able pupils in what is quite a demanding task. Misses some opportunities to make whole class points as individual work either offers up particular problems (e.g. joining techniques) or successes. Grade 4

RESPONSE: Cooperative. Ps happy to describe work in progress and show pride in outcomes. Many persevere and try different ideas when they have a problem e.g. how to make a structure stand upright when it is top heavy. Generally prepared to work independently but one or two less able pupils have difficulty in managing own time and become frustrated with their lack of progress. Grade 3

ATTAINMENT: Most show adequate competence in developing an idea through from initial analysis, focusing on a chosen section of the original drawing/study aid to plan and make the 3D form. They select the section of drawing for development intelligently, and the more able identify and explore the potential of the natural forms in an individual and expressive manner. Less able make forms that are much more simplistic. Early drawing stage in folders shows mainly competent analytical studies from plant/seed head/pod forms. Grade 4

PROGRESS: Short-term progress is evident as pupils build the sculptural forms. For the great majority work is productive and skill and understanding develop reasonably well. Many make sensible decisions about size/scale/combination of materials and combine gum tape, papier mache, rolled paper and wire with confidence. But barely adequate progress for a few, least able pupils who need better support to succeed. Grade 4

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

This is one of a set of booklets which make up *Inspecting subjects and aspects 11-18*. The set consists of:

- an introductory booklet, *General guidance*, which is for all inspectors who evaluate the work of secondary age pupils - it is mainly about inspecting subjects;
- separate booklets on inspecting specific subjects and aspects; the contents page of *General guidance* shows the subjects and aspects which have booklets.

The main points in the *General guidance* are summarised in each subject, but if you are inspecting the work of secondary age pupils you should read the introductory booklet so that you are fully in the picture of what you have to do.

The contents of all the booklets are on the Internet and can be accessed from OFSTED's website [<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>]. This will allow you to obtain guidance for individual subjects or aspects.

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